

## The Perspectives of English Teachers Toward Writing Education, as well as the Obstacles they Encounter

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### ABSTRACT

Many ESL teachers find it difficult to build their students' linguistic competency, which makes teaching one of the most productive talents in the English language. The main objective of the study is to investigate the difficulties that ESL teachers have while attempting to teach writing skills to students in university settings. According to the findings of this study, art faculty professors at the university level are experiencing difficulties. Teachers' concerns regarding teaching writing skills were gathered using questionnaires, which were administered by the researcher. It was decided to adopt a descriptive approach to report the issues that instructors experienced when teaching writing skills to their students. There were a total of 12 questions on the questionnaire. It was discovered through this investigation that there were some problematic elements, but that there were also some practical remedies that might be implemented. Teacher reflection could be helped by the findings and recommendations of this study, which could also help authorities support teachers' efforts to improve students' writing skills.

**Key words:** Obstacles of Writing, Teachers' Encounter, Academic Writing, L2 Writer

### INTRODUCTION

English is a universally recognised language for communication, education, and business across the world. English has risen to become a critical language in our country. The English language is our country's second official language. Learning the four fundamental abilities of reading, writing, listening, and speaking is what English courses are all about. Writing is an essential part of learning English as a second language, as well as any other foreign language. Talents should be taught in a structured setting (Giridharan and Robson, 2011). Children must learn to be creative and to write effectively in elementary school if they are to be successful in their future endeavours. Because of this, ESL students should work on improving their writing abilities in order to have more career prospects once they graduate from college. The business sector is looking for future employees who will be able to communicate effectively in writing. Students that have strong writing talents are able to connect with their environment and absorb knowledge from a variety of perspectives. Writing is a necessary skill in many aspects of professional life, especially in the creative industries. However, despite the fact that writing is a vital academic skill, various past studies have indicated that it is not promoted or effective among students. This is the fundamental difficulty. As a result, even though English classes are required in most schools, they aren't very good. The focus is on how the students speak and write.

The profound writing talents of the students have not been effectively developed as a result of this. To put it another way, the curriculum and teaching practises do not effectively prepare students for the task of writing. In this case, it suggests that Malaysian students are unable to efficiently and creatively express themselves in the classroom. Unless students put in the time to improve their writing abilities, they may have issues. Due to the widespread use of this language for global knowledge mediation, ESL students are required to acquire this proficiency. In other words, by becoming good writers and accumulating knowledge in a variety of subjects, students will earn independence and become self-sufficient. Nunan (1999) asserts that writing a clear, fluent, and lengthy essay is the most difficult task in the process of learning a foreign language. Writing, according to Hyland, is a complex cognitive activity involving a variety of processes and approaches that takes time. The ability to write is not a simple talent for ESL students to master, as can be seen in the examples provided. It is essential for the writer and the reader to be able to communicate effectively.

Writing is the supreme master of all linguistic talents, since anyone who does not know how to write is considered foolish and uninformed. Studies on writing Encounters among EFL students in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam have been carried out as a result of these

efforts. The data indicate that students rarely write, and that intervention strategies are the most effective means of addressing this issue. However, very little study has been conducted on Malaysian students' writing abilities, attitudes, and desire to improve their writing abilities in order to improve their grades.

This study will focus on University pupils to learn about their writing difficulties and obstacles. According to Mohtar et al. (2017), students' written work frequently displays flaws, particularly in the structures and concepts they convey. Because instructors don't grasp their students' issues, they offer little writing advice. To help children with their writing, instructors must first identify their issues. It is critical to observe how instructors teach writing to improve this talent.

### Definition of Writing

Writing is a method of putting thoughts, feelings, and experiences into words. According to Nunan (1989), writing is not a natural activity. People from all walks of life learn to communicate in the language. Meanwhile, ESL students should be encouraged to express their ideas, experiences, emotions, and feelings. Asmuti (2002) argues that acquiring writing talent allows authors to organise their thoughts and elaborate on them in an organised way. A student must expand their vocabulary, idioms, and grammatical structure while learning a language.

### Approaches to Writing

To teach writing, various methods and strategies must be used (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019). The writing approach is defined by the relationship between the authors' perspectives on writing and the patterns of writing methods they use. Writing approaches are the ideas, norms, and ethics that are used in schools when they teach writing.

### Product Approach

The product approach to writing focuses on the result rather than the process. For example, the product approach to writing concentrates on the text, essay storyline, etc., Nunan, 1989. The instructor is concerned about the final output being legible, grammatically accurate, and using discourse norms like significant ideas and supporting information. Grammar, spelling, and vocabulary are given top priority; Getnet (1994) defines the product approach as an orientation that emphasises the final product of pupils. This method is also described as "a conventional technique in which pupils are urged to imitate a model text" (Gabrielatos, 2002). It states that in ESL writing classes, pupils must follow four stages.

First, students must read example essays and note the essays' distinctive features, such as how ideas are organized, the language used, and writing mechanics. In the second phase, students isolate the model essays' characteristics. Students attempt to replicate the sample essays by arranging their thoughts according to the model. During this stage, the organisation of ideas takes precedence over the ideas

themselves. The last step is for pupils to write their essays, utilising skills, sentence structures, and terminology. For example, Raimes explains that pupils are given phrases to copy and modify with the minimal possibility of making mistakes. This technique helps students utilise particular pattern-product approaches in the writing of narrative, descriptive, and persuasive essays. According to Tangpermpoon (2008), pupils will also increase their grammatical awareness and learn to rectify vocabulary and sentence structures. People don't like this way of writing because it focuses on grammar and syntax instead of the writing process.

### Process Approach

The phrase "process writing" is used by Kroll (2001). He claims writing is a cyclical process. Before completing a writing assignment, students will go through a few phases. They can always go back and edit their work. This method has four stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. This method emphasises a lot of different things in the classroom, like brainstorming, rewriting, and group discussions.

### Eclectic Approach

The eclectic approach combines genres and methods. This method is gaining popularity for teaching writing skills. This method is also thought to help instructors and students improve their writing abilities by expressing their originality. This method helps students grasp the target genre's characteristics, enhancing their competence since they simultaneously study form, language, and function. In conclusion, no one way can enhance students' writing competence in ESL classes.

### Encounters in Writing

According to Heaton (1975), teaching writing is difficult. Writing proficiency includes grammatical, rhetorical, intellectual, and judgemental components. They lack fundamental grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling abilities. Mistakes in grammar, sentence structure, tenses, and spelling are a student's lack of writing skills owing to a lack of language. Vocabulary is the basis of excellent writing. Students communicate orally and in writing. Writing requires good grammar and offers information to help readers understand it. Grammar-Encountered students will struggle to construct appropriate phrases.

Nyangau Benard (2014) said a preposition is a typical student mistake; poor spelling is another hurdle for young writers. He says that spelling is an essential part of writing. ESL students often delete or add letters to their spelling. Students misspell words depending on the sound. Inconsistencies in English spelling create spelling errors. L1 interference, especially in Bahasa Melayu, is harming Malaysian ESL secondary students' English literacy. Grammar was shown to be a problem for 120 Malaysian students learning to write. The L1 impact produces grammatical errors. A lack of grammatically correct phrases causes anxiety among ESL pupils. According to Myles (2002), students frequently inter-

pret while writing. Myles (2002) quotes Friedlander (1990), saying that kids use the first language to think and pay attention.

### Problem of the study

Fareed et al. (2016) found that 30 ESL undergraduates had language competence (grammar, syntax, and vocabulary), writing anxiety, vague ideas, relying on L1, and poor structural organization. They also ruled out several causes for the issues. They lacked training, thought, writing practice, and reading habits. Singh et al. (2017) examined 144 students' writings using content analysis. The results revealed two common writing errors: subject-verb agreement and tenses. The pupils overgeneralized, causing them to mix up the tenses. Students also struggled with complicated building construction. Students' failure to utilise subject-verb agreement correctly created this issue. Similar studies also noted that even university students made these mistakes due to a lack of mastery of English. Ibnian (2017) found that pupils had different writing issues – morphology, syntax, use errors, mechanical faults, spelling, punctuation, capitalization (spelling, tenses), prepositions, and connectors. Time constraints and the lack of clear evaluation methods and mark systems made it hard for EFL students to write.

The lack of acceptable teaching methods, resources for consultation, and unsuitable subjects made it difficult for pupils to participate in writing tasks. A questionnaire was used by Habibi et al. (2017) for 70 students. The findings indicated that students face seven writing issues: inadequate organization or illogical sequence, word choice, grammatical mistakes, spelling, concept confusion, punctuation, and capitalization. The study found that female students struggle with word choice, whereas male students struggle with grammatical errors. Pablo and Lasaten (2018) encountered 227 students working with a lack of diversity in content and ideas, a lack of connectives in their organization, improper vocabulary, word choice, lousy sentence structures in language usage, and pronouns. In part, this is because of the difficulties students have with writing. The quality of their essays ranges from bad to fair.

### Finding of the study

The findings of the studies also provided solutions for instructors and students. In addition to giving examples, teachers can assist students with their needs. Students should read more to improve their vocabulary and grammar. Knowing their students' needs and abilities helps ESL teachers design writing lessons. Teachers should use appropriate methods to teach. Teachers should also provide students with resources. Giving children feedback while they are writing can be beneficial. In addition, the study suggests combining appropriate writing methods for framing. An early survey of broader options, especially for elementary school children, is recommended to improve writing skills.

This study looked at 14 papers from 2012 to 2020 for writing issues—mostly tertiary studies. Only one study from a secondary school was included. Most studies highlighted

ESL students' writing issues. Different designs and equipment were used, but the results were nearly identical. Most students struggled with vocabulary, grammar, and concept organization. Many of the studies examined in this systematic review addressed these questions. These ideas are for future instructors to make ESL students' writing lessons more fun and engaging. Instructors can help students with their writing assignments by providing feedback, sample essays, and scaffolding. Adopt student-centered teaching strategies. Meanwhile, students should improve their writing skills. Reading improves writing. This helps students learn information and concepts. Grammar and vocabulary should be improved.

### Theory

The inability of students to set goals for themselves, both macro and micro, is a common problem. The issues stem from internal factors such as educators' inability to use evidence-based examples in everyday teaching and students' failure to identify their cognitive levels. All of these issues are modifiable and require extensive support from English educators. To improve student learning outcomes, teachers must identify and address these issues (Moses et al., 2019). Observing children's writing helps introduce a theory of cognitive processes. It aids in writing skills and lays the groundwork for a more in-depth study of writing thought. The approach emphasises goal setting through four steps: thinking, prewriting, drafting, rewriting, and proofreading. It will help generate new ideas and opinions (Di Zhang, 2019). The theory also supports teachers as leaders in the process of developing writing skills. When you use critical thinking and problem-solving skills, you can improve your writing skills and make learning less difficult.

### DISCUSSION

The inability of teachers to apply classroom-based examples to increase students' cognitive capacity will contribute to poor writing skills (Moses et al., 2019). Teachers who use a mental process lens allow students to write without restriction. Setting a time limit will enable students to brainstorm and write down their ideas. However, some students can still correct errors in their writing and use visual planners to help organise their ideas (El Soufi & See 2019). The stimuli to generate thoughts are an advantage, but some students may struggle to recall their thoughts promptly. Environmental distractions can cause a lack of focus. Writing is an important study skill for all students. A fast "To Write is a method in which students are given a topic, issue, or idea to write about and a time limit. Students should register for the entire period, regardless of errors. Students could use this method. Preparing a topic helps students think in a specific direction and supports their writing. This quick method may confuse some students (Hodges & Tracey, 2017). Graphic organisers can also be used to improve writing patterns. It can use writing instructional strategies (Inaltekin & Goksu, 2019). Students could have used a mind map or timeline to generate ideas. This will help students create more ideas for writing if they lack the visual sense and knowledge to extract pictures from mind maps.

## Recommendations

The audience, assistant, evaluator, and examiner are primary roles for teachers in the process approach to teaching writing. Innovici (2015). As an audience, the teacher must respond appropriately to the points made by students in their writing. A teacher's assistant must help students write constructively in terms of purpose and language. The writing process requires the same amount of time and effort as vocabulary and grammar. Writing helps students improve their grammatical and vocabulary skills while also developing other linguistic skills. As evaluators, teachers provide feedback on the writing piece's strengths and weaknesses as well as its overall outcome. A teacher examines students' proficiency. As an alternative idea, teachers should use as many different techniques as possible, with the cognitive approach helping students the most. Teachers can use mind maps before writing. So that students can appreciate visual aids in writing, teachers should encourage students to create their own mind maps. Gardner (1999) claims that mind maps can capture students' spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, and visual intelligence. Some teaching writing techniques include brainstorming, concept mapping, list-making, and note-taking (Bukhari, 2016). These are common prewriting techniques to help students generate writing ideas.

Then comes drafting. For Brown (2001), "drafting is viewed as an important and complex set of strategies that require time, patience, and training." They should now explain the language's vocabulary, syntax, and lexis. Teachers should provide models, samples, and guidelines during the drafting process and encourage students to revise and edit their work. With vocabulary and guide words related to the theme or genre, students are more focused and guided. The language input for the task begins here and continues in subsequent writing stages. Teachers can now assign students to work in groups or individually. Then comes proofreading, peer editing, and writing. Teachers should encourage students to exchange and evaluate their peers' texts during the proofreading and peer editing stages. So that they can improve their editing skills and focus on important information, students must first edit their own or peers' work. Thus, students improve their writing. Finally, students will produce personal papers, either collaboratively or individually. Students work hard to write a piece of writing, so the teacher must respond correctly.

Positive teacher feedback can help students gain confidence and inspiration to write better in the future. The final step is publication. Students could read their work in front of their peers or read their peers' final works in Bukhari (, 2016). Publishing is important for students because it allows them to share their work with a real audience of peers and other students. It also instils ownership in the student. This is significant because students will strive to improve their performance to be recognised as writers. The cognitive-process approach ensures that students master the process of writing, including prewriting, drafting, feedback, and rewriting. These two main approaches complement each other throughout the writing process. However, more research is needed to see how the cognitive-process-based approach in writing classes works.

## Implementation

This study suggests that teachers teach writing using a cognitive-process approach. This approach can help students improve their writing skills and overcome problems with expressing themselves in writing. Smalley et al. (2001) claim that a process approach can help students learn English and improve their writing skills. Students can work through the steps at their own pace, gradually building confidence, interest, and self-esteem. Students can switch between levels to develop enviable compositions. This study focused on teaching three components of writing: content, organization, and grammar. These three elements are important to evaluate because they affect writing quality. Writing is about content. It is the essence of all great writing.

Organize facts and ideas first, then use grammar to construct sentences. Wugha (2007). Teachers should use the process approach to help students organise their thoughts while writing, making them more motivated to finish their assignments. Students will become better writers and learn the art of writing by implementing the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

## CONCLUSION

Written output and cognitive processes are intricately intertwined, and scholars are still learning about them. Writing theory is increasingly focusing on creativity and sociability. The "writing approach" refers to the issues a teacher faces when teaching writing skills. The teacher can use cognitive writing theory to identify problems and improve current practises to improve student academic outcomes. The cognitive approach ignores various environments like enthusiasm, involvement, and social influence. The use of mind maps and classroom exercises can help students generate more ideas and improve their cognitive abilities. But these factors lack external consensus. Creating relationships with students, understanding their social backgrounds, and verbally encouraging them can help them write well. Teachers connect theory and practise to stimulate learners' learning. Finally, approaches help teachers describe their methods to other students.

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